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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 21 August 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

In blatant contempt for the call reiterated yesterday by the Security Council for an immediate ceasefire, Israel, the occupying Power, continues its military airstrikes against the Gaza Strip, terrorizing the Palestinian civilian population as it wreaks further death, injury and destruction. The Palestinian nation continues to grieve as the death toll continues to rise and the lives of more innocent children, women, men and elderly persons are destroyed by this resumed Israeli onslaught.

Today, at least 29 more Palestinians have been deliberately and wantonly killed by the Israeli occupying forces in missile airstrikes, drone attacks and bombings on densely populated civilian areas. Israel has also resumed its illegal policy of targeted assassinations against Palestinians, boasting of its extrajudicial killing of several people in recent days in attacks that have also killed many civilians, including several members of the same families. Here, it must be recalled that the wilful killing and injury of persons is considered to be a grave breach as defined in article 147 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. For all these war crimes and crimes against humanity, the occupying Power must be held accountable.

Among those killed today by the Israeli occupying forces were four people hit by an Israeli drone-fired missile as they dug graves to bury their relatives at the Sheikh Radwan cemetery in Gaza City. The victims were Mohammed Talal Abu Nahl, Rami Abu Nahl, Haitham Tafesh and Abed Talal Shioukh. Another four people, all members of the Al-Reefi family, were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a garden near Al-Sunna Mosque in Gaza City. The victims of this barbaric attack were Nasr Ziyad Al-Reefi and three children: Omar Nasr Al-Reefi, Abdallah Tareq Al-Reefi and Mohammed Ziyad Al-Reefi. Today, the ninth member of the Allouh family, Iman Allouh, di[illegible] of wounds sustained in an attack on her family home

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yesterday; she has met the same tragic fate of many of the injured who have not survived these barbaric Israeli attacks.

In a targeted assassination strike on a home in the Tel al-Sultan neighbourhood of Rafah, Israeli occupying forces killed three men: Mohammed Barhoum, Mohammed Abu Shamalah and Raed Attar. Also killed in that airstrike were an elderly man, Hassan Hussein Younis (age 75), and his wife, Amal Ibrahim Younis (age 74), and granddaughter, Saba Rami Younis (age 4), as well another woman, Aisha Attieh (age 60) and Ahmed Nasser Kullab (age 17). A 13-year-old boy, Hassan Tamboura, and Srour Tamboura (age 36) were also killed in an Israeli airstrike on Beit Lahiya, and a 17-year-old boy, Jumaa Matar, was killed in an attack on Al-Nusreirat refugee camp. Also today, Ibrahim Issam Hammad (age 22) and Marwan Abu Shalouf (age 28) were killed by an Israeli strike on a motorcycle in Rafah. Hamdan Salem Hadayed (age 40) was killed in a strike on Khan Younis.

The terror and panic caused by the ongoing Israeli military attacks on the Palestinian civilian population in all areas of Gaza has also caused a dramatic increase in the number of displaced persons fleeing their homes for safety, after a reduction in the number of displaced persons during the period of the temporary ceasefire. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, there are now 435,000 Palestinians displaced in Gaza and figures of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) indicate that, at this time, more than 261,000 of the displaced are seeking shelter and protection in 82 UNRWA facilities. Here, we must again draw the international community's attention to the enormous humanitarian needs for water, food, medicines and hygiene and other essential services to these families, and reiterate the appeal for urgent donor support for the provision of emergency relief and assistance to them through UNRWA and United Nations partner agencies, including the World Food Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

In this regard, children, who constitute the majority of the population of Gaza, continue to suffer disproportionately from the traumatic impact of this ongoing Israeli military aggression and the consequent insecurity, fear and despair that is plaguing the entire Palestinian civilian population. In the 48 hours since the temporary ceasefire collapsed, reports indicate that nine children have been killed and dozens injured in Israeli attacks; more are feared dead in the rubble of bombed homes.

As indicated by the UNICEF field office in Gaza, the situation of Palestinian children is extremely dire as they suffer through the third terrifying Israeli war in seven years, enduring massive physical, emotional and psychological trauma, having suffered the loss of their parents and other family and community members, witnessed the killing and injury of persons, and suffered the destruction of their homes, neighbourhoods and schools, the dispossession of their families and repeated displacement. Moreover, they continue to endure the multiple, far-reaching and traumatic effects of the pervasive poverty, hunger and illness deliberately inflicted by Israel in its successive wars on Gaza and by its inhumane blockade in gross collective punishment of the Palestinian people and disfigurement of the Palestinian society. As children around the world prepare to begin a new school year, the children in Gaza are facing the potential loss of their education opportunities if this

grave crisis continues and if the plight of the thousands of displaced sheltering in UNRWA schools is unresolved.

At the same time, Israel, the occupying Power, has been relentless in its oppression and torment of the Palestinian civilian population in the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The illegal Israeli settlement campaign, home demolitions, arrests of Palestinians, including children, military raids of towns, villages and refugee camps, and all other methods of repression continue to be perpetrated by the occupying Power against the population. The Israeli violations are innumerable but for brevity I will only point out a few:

- Yesterday, 20 August, Israeli occupying forces raided the home of Palestinian Legislative Council member Khaleda Jarrar in the pre-dawn hours and issued to her a military order demanding that she be forcibly deported from her Ramallah home within 24 hours. We condemn this unlawful act of blatant harassment and forced transfer, which is the latest illegal action against a democratically elected official. In this regard, 36 elected officials remain in captivity, under detention or administrative detention, in Israeli jails.

- Also today, the Israeli occupying forces demolished four Palestinian homes in the Nablus area, one of which was 100 years old, rendering more Palestinian families homeless. Occupying forces also carried out numerous raids in villages surrounding Nablus, forcibly searching and ransacking homes and detaining more than 30 people for hours of interrogation. Israeli settlers in the Nablus area continue their reign of terror and violence against Palestinian civilians, as another Palestinian man, Nimer Mohammed Abu Eishah (age 32), from the village of Beit Wazan, was deliberately struck today by the car of a settler.

- A young Palestinian man, 30-year-old Muath Dureidi, who was travelling back into the West Bank for a new job, was kidnapped and detained by the Israeli occupying forces at an interrogation centre near Jenin for over 28 days without any explanation. For the duration of his captivity, neither his family members nor his lawyers were allowed to visit him and, by the time he was released — on a bail of 3,000 shekels — he had suffered a nervous breakdown and had gone completely mute.

We condemn the infliction of such trauma and terror on the Palestinian people — whether collectively or individually, in the Gaza Strip or in the West Bank — by Israel, the occupying Power. Moreover, we will neither relent in our calls for an end to all of these illegal, inhumane and destructive Israeli policies and practices, nor relent in our calls for all those responsible, whether Israeli government officials, military personnel or settlers, to be held accountable for all of these heinous crimes.

In closing, as we reiterate our calls for an end to the Israeli military aggression being waged against our people in the Gaza Strip and all other crimes against the Palestinian people in the rest of the Occupied State of Palestine, we also reiterate our calls on the international community to shoulder their legal obligations and political responsibilities in this regard. As Israel continues to lay waste to international law, we call on the international community, including the Security Council, to act forthwith to give meaning to the provisions of international

humanitarian law regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict and to uphold the commitments in this regard. Serious international action and pressure are needed to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to abandon its intransigent and maximalist positions, cease its military offensive against the defenceless civilian population under its occupation and commit to the law and principles of peace that the Palestinian people, with strong global support, have long committed themselves to.

This letter is in follow-up to our 517 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 20 August 2014 (A/ES-10/650-S/2014/607) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations